

Litton (A.)
AN ADDRESS

TO THE

GRADUATES

OF THE

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

OF THE

ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY,

DELIVERED, FEBRUARY 28th, 1851.

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## ADDRESS.

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Several years ago, I stood on the shore of the Atlantic, and, for the first time, witnessed the departure of a vessel for another clime, distant far over the waters of the deep. A crowd had assembled there, and its eager curiosity and anxious impatience naturally suggested the question, is the departure of a ship from this port so unusual an event, that to witness it, labor lays aside its toil, the artisan leaves his workshop, the boy deserts his play-ground, the matron her fire-side, and the lawyer his court? Soon, however, it was evident that that vessel was to be in part freighted with human souls, and was destined to bear on its long and solitary voyage the objects of human love and unbought affection. The gathered crowd consisted of friends and kindred, who had accompanied their companions and relatives to the beach of the ocean, to bid them a long adieu, and to supplicate the Ruler of Storms to guard that frail bark against the tempests and relentless violence of wind and wave, and to vouchsafe it a safe and prosperous voyage over the depths of the ocean.

*Gentlemen Graduates:* You have this night come to set sail upon the ocean of active life, and friends and relatives have crowded down to the water's edge to witness your departure, and to supplicate that your frail barks may not be wrecked by the storms or the tempests of the sea of professional life, nor be the play things of its currents; but that they may have a prosperous voyage over its troubled waters, and reach, unharmed and unscathed, the haven of professional success.

Doubtless there are other eyes, than those now visible, gazing upon the scene. Mothers who, with the sleepless eye of affection, have watched the helplessness of infancy, and ever shielded you with the panoply of love; and fathers, who have wasted the strength of their noble manhood, in toil and labor, that you might drink of the living waters of science, are, in imagination, present; and would, ere you are released from the restraints of parental control, and set forth alone upon the voyage of life, send up the fervent prayer of affection, that you may be true to the early lessons of childhood, true to yourselves, and ever true to the holy mission of god-like philanthropy under whose banner you this night enlist.

The benevolent tendencies of the age, and its more correct appreciation of what constitutes personal worth and true national glory, are highly propitious to you. Time was, when brute force was the only object of human admiration. The common brotherhood of mankind, as taught by christianity, was not then recognized by man. Glory was bright in pro-

portion as it was dyed in human gore, and greatness was measured by the hecatombs, slaughtered at the shrine of human selfishness. The warrior reeking with the blood of millions; the bold knight who could defend his castle against armed hosts; the power that could sweep earth's surface with the besem of destruction, and obliterate others from the catalogue of nations; these were the highest objects of ambition; these were the idols for the homage and worship of the people.

The present, however, is emphatically an age of philanthropy. A higher and nobler spirit is now abroad, inspiring the human heart to the attainment of objects more worthy of its god-like capacities. Another spirit has breathed a new life into man, and sent him forth upon a holier mission, to sound and explore the depths of the ocean of human misery. It has taught him to pity the blind, and persuaded him not to leave them helpless and unprotected in their sad darkness; and instructed him to guide and protect them, and to touch with anointed hand their sealed vision. It has inspired him with deep commiseration for the deaf and the dumb; and commissioned him to gather them together, to guard and protect them; and almost empowered him to unstop their ears and unloose their tongues. It has moved him with sorrow for the insane, and sent him to gather them into asylums, that, by the divine power of love and kindness, the unclean spirit of madness may be cast out, and dethroned reason be again re-seated upon the watch-tower of life. It has sent him to the dark and loathsome cells of the prison, to recognize in its melancholy inmate, a brother, deserving of sympathy and sorrow; and taught him "to gem its pavement with the flowers of hope, to arch its ceiling with heaven's bow of mercy, and to hang its walls with the dewy drapery of penitence," that, if possible, he may win him back again to virtue and happiness.

It is now teaching him to prize military glory less, and to value it only for the cause in which it has been won. While for that which encircles the spotless character of a Washington, there is no admiration too deep, and no homage too grateful; there is no contempt too unmitigated, and no abhorrence too unmingled and unmeasured for the military fame which has encircled with blood-stained laurels the brow of the miscreant Haynau.

National greatness, it enculcates, is not to be measured by the lengthened line of its armed battlements, nor by the strength of its navy, nor by the numbers of its army, nor by its tattered banners, trophies of a thousand victorious battle fields; but by the moral and intellectual spirit of its people.

The strong arm of government is now used, not to bear aloft the banner of war, but to throw over its subjects the shield of protecting justice, to elevate them by knowledge, to dignify them by science, and to unite them into one common, sympathizing brotherhood, by the iron bands of rail ways. National enterprize is now beginning to be less directed to foreign conquests, than to bear to other nations the abundance of agriculture, the products of arts and the revelations of science—the

richest fruits of civilization. The object of conquest now is to reclaim man from the dominion of barbarism—to free him from the shackles of ignorance, to replace the debasement of idolatry by the refinement of christianity, and to erect upon minarets, where now floats the crescent of superstition, the banner and the cross of Christ.

Now, nations have combined their united navies to sweep from the bosom of the ocean those emissaries of hell, that would kindle among barbarian nations the fires of war; that captives may be taken and chained and sold into the thralldom of slavery. Now, we behold the two most powerful nations of the earth, not contending in deadly strife which has more brute force and physical ability; but aiding each other, as mother and daughter, in searching, with the fervor of a woman's love, the ice-fields of the Artic Ocean; the mother, for her lost children, and the daughter for her ship-wrecked brothers. But a few years ago, the people of a powerful nation rose in the majesty of a pure and holy philanthropy, and, from the garner house of their abundance, sent their vessels laden with the fruits of its virgin soil, to rescue the maiden fair, the helpless infant, the generous youth, the doating mother, the grey-haired sire of a neighboring isle from the untold and undescribable miseries of a famine, that desolated it with unmitigated fury. This was the noble offering of a nation's charity. This was a deed more glorious and sublime, than the victories of a hundred battle-fields. This was as great in moral grandeur, as its conception was divine, and millions were thus saved, who have reared, in "the Gem of the Sea, the Emerald Isle," a thousand altars, from which, century after century, shall ascend the warm incense of Irish gratitude, and the fervent prayers of unborn thousands, that God will ever guard, unbroken and unsullied, the glorious fabric of the American Union.

We find then, in the spirit of the age, a heart of affection, for missions of benevolence and good to our fellow-creatures, that will ever warm and animate your generous impulses. We find a sympathy responsive to all exertions of kindness and charity towards suffering, oppressed and degraded man, that will ever cheer and sustain your flagging energies. Every where we hear a voice of cheering encouragement for him, who will dedicate the energies of his mind to the alleviation of pain, to the moral elevation of degraded and imbruted humanity, and that will ever whisper, in silent and angel tones, weary not in thy mission.

Life is a school for all. In it and by it, should be trained the moral and intellectual nature by which, each will be better fitted for a higher and nobler sphere of action. Its duties, social, civil, political and national, its labors of necessity, its joys and its sorrows, are but lessons given to aid in the development of his moral and intellectual faculties. To accumulate wealth is but a secondary consideration, and only as an instrument to be used. Its greatest treasures bring but the spirit of pauperism, and sink into a deeper poverty; unless the character be rightly formed to enjoy them. The legacy of inherited fortune is most fre-

quently, but a bitter curse to him who has not learned how to use it. As an opiate, it lulls into the slumber of indifference, the affections of the heart and the energies of the mind.

Rank and position are not to be sought as ends, but as means. He who would covet them for the fawning sycophancy that they may procure, for the craven-hearted adulation that they may draw forth, has but an imperfect idea of life. Life has higher and nobler aims than the duties of the mart, or the occupations of the exchange, or seeking the loud hosannas of popular admiration. Its true aim is moral and intellectual culture, and the elevation and refinement which these bring with them. Its goal is the attainment of the highest excellence permitted by the laws of our individual constitution.

He who adopts the medical profession in the right spirit, and pursues it with a single-hearted devotion, with undivided energies, with the determination to fail and to falter not in being useful, is blessed—blessed by being the humble instrument of much good to his fellow-man, but thrice blessed by the reflex influence which the profession, thus cultivated and thus pursued, will ever exercise in the formation of his own character. To those who enter it, it offers the most favorable conditions for the formation of the highest style of character, and presents, perhaps more than any other profession or pursuit, the amplest opportunity for the culture of the intellect, and for strengthening and developing the moral feelings.

For her devotee she offers a literature rich in the noblest trophies of genius, and gathered from every field of knowledge. The temple of medical literature is reverend with age, for its foundations were laid when the heart first vibrated in sympathy to human suffering; and thought first found a permanent record in written language. It is filled with the votive offerings of the God-inspired of every clime and every nation. Its treasury is rich in the contributions of the patient and unwearied research of every land. Its records are written in the burning words of devotion to truth and love to humanity.

To gather, then, these pearls, which the waves of past centuries have washed upon the sea-shore of knowledge, brings with it intellectual culture. To pore over the inspiration of genius, and follow it as it reveals the mysterious phenomena of life, must warm and expand the faculties of the mind. To follow reason as she traces, through the chaotic darkness and confusion of symptoms, the seat of disease, must strengthen its powers.

While its literature is rich, and furnishes abundant and nutritious food on which mind may feed and grow in power, in strength and in vigor, it is in the constant application of those truths and discovered principles, that the amplest opportunities are furnished for the culture of the mental faculties and the full development of their powers. The physician's duties require him daily and almost hourly to cultivate each of these. Observation plies her constant task in registering phenomena, in correctly noting the progress of disease, and in tracing the changes effected by



remedies. Memory is required to treasure up these and to furnish the results of past experience. Judgment is summoned to discover the resemblance between these, and those which past observation has discovered to be the results of known causes. Reason is taxed in making a diagnosis and determining the treatment best adapted to the disease and the constitution.

To make out a correct diagnosis, and to determine what is the most appropriate treatment, requires the experience of every faculty of the mind. To administer a medicine calls for no higher capacity than that of a child or a fool; but to know *what* to administer, and *when*, demands the highest capacities of the human mind, enlightened by science, and guided by the observation of the past. This is a task which, while it demands the highest powers of the mind, disciplines them and gives to them strength and increased vigor. This is a task which each must sedulously perform, who will pursue medicine as an art, enlightened and guided by science. This is a labor which none but the recreantly negligent can disregard, and, if unperformed, will sink the practitioner into the depths of an arrant quackery, from which all the diplomas of the land are too powerless to redeem him.

While then the physician finds in the study of medicine, in the application of its principles, in the daily duty of concentrating his attention, of lending his observation to note the progress of disease, as manifested in the language of symptoms, and in the effort, of reason and reflection to interpret and read aright the full significance of these hieroglyphics of diseased nature, constant and continued exercise for his mind; in the duty imposed upon him to build up and complete the superstructure of medical science, he finds still farther discipline and culture for his mental powers.

The highest aim of medicine is to discover the laws of life, to study its manifestations in health and disease, and to learn the changes and influences produced on these by every variety of matter. How broad and endless this study is, he who has devoted most years to it, can best tell. How much remains to be investigated, and what an impenetrable veil still enshrouds many of the phenomena of even healthy life, all must deplore who, through long years, have consecrated to these investigations nights of wearied toil and days of ever returning labor.

True, genius in every land and every age has been toiling to give to medicine precision and unerring certainty. True, that the brightest intellects of the past and the present have laid upon its altar the noble and the rich offerings of their powers and their industry. True, that much has been accomplished—that mortality has been diminished—that life has been snatched from a premature grave—and that, in some instances, bounds have been set to the ravages of pestilence. True, that the structure of the human system has been carefully examined and minutely investigated. But how little do we still know of all the functions of its different organs, and how imperfectly as yet has been revealed the influence of their altered and modified action upon the animal economy!

How many diseases yet remain, whose course is to be minutely and thoroughly investigated, and the symptoms that invariably accompany them are yet to be discovered! How comparatively few diseases are there of which we can positively say, what are their essential elements, and what the phenomena without the manifestation of which they can never occur! What a boundless field of labor is yet untilled, that we may learn the action of external agents upon healthy and diseased organs, and discover the mode in which they produce their remedial influence!

Nor should it be spoken as a reproach to medicine, that, though cultivated and nurtured and tended by the noblest spirits of all ages and of every civilized nation, it is still involved in much uncertainty. That, though numberless laborers have for ages been gathering from the quarries of every land and clime the materials, and been toiling with a labor unremitting and a perseverance indomitable, to complete and perfect the superstructure of medical science, the glorious temple is incomplete and still stands unfinished, is no dishonor to the profession. That there are mysterious recesses in the phenomena of life, at which genius and intellect have for years been knocking in order to gain admittance, and as yet entrance has been denied, is owing to the inherent difficulties of these investigations, and is principally owing "to the apparent want of that uniformity of phenomena which is so remarkable in other branches of physical science."

In the performance of the duties imposed on the physician to unravel the mysterious, to discover the unknown, to trace that uniformity in the phenomena of life, which is nature's law in the operations of mind and the affinities of matter, is demanded the highest culture of the mind, and brings with it a healthy exercise for all its faculties. It exercises attention, memory and conception, and the powers of generalization, and requires reason to watch with sleepless eye, that all these have carefully performed their duties right. It requires that he be an observer, close and patient, of the operation of life's laws, and consecrates him as a priest to record them with unerring truth and impartial fidelity. It demands that he ascend from sequence to sequence up to its first cause, separating the accidental from the essential in all phenomena. It demands that the mind should be unbiased by prepossessions, uncontrolled by authority, and untrammelled by the despotism of theory. These are all influences that must be cast off, for they only hamper the free action of reason. The sectarian who adopts his dogmas, and then searches holy writ for the foundations of his adopted creed will come from his task more confirmed than ever in his blinded bigotry. The lawyer, whose convictions are settled as to the innocence of his client, is but little fitted to interpret calmly and impartially the revelations of testimony; and from that which to other minds carries the convictions of crime, he gathers only evidence strong as holy writ of injured innocence and slandered merit. The politician, who has sworn allegiance to party, will find his mind biased and his reason enthralled, when he would im-



partially weigh questions of national policy and pronounce judgment upon men and measures. The physician who would observe nature with a mind fettered by theory, will see it through a colored medium, that will distort and give to it an unnatural hue. Though it may strengthen the elective affinity of his mind for facts, they will be only such as support and sustain his theory. His mind will be magnetized by it, and though it may vibrate apparently free and untrammelled, the arc of its vibrations will become less and less, and ultimately in subjugation to its hidden influence, it will ever be found faithfully pointing to that pole of his thoughts, his cherished theory. The sanctuary of his mind must be cleansed from the false idols of preconceived opinions and ill-founded hypothesis, if he would that it may be a fit temple, wherein may be enshrined the nobler divinity of truth.

To keep active the intellectual faculties requires the stimulus of desires and motives. To guard them against the stagnation of listlessness, there must be incentives. He who studies without farther inducement than arises from curiosity soon wearies, and sinks into the torpor of indifference.

In the constant application which the physician is required to make of his knowledge, he finds a motive, a stimulus, an incentive, and a condition most favorable for unwearied efforts and for constant interest. He accumulates knowledge, not as a mere amusement to take from idleness its heavy languor, and to give wings to the hours that lingeringly drag on; but he gathers it as a binding duty and obligation, that he may apply it. In his daily pursuits, he finds a constant demand for the accumulated science that he may have drawn from the treasury of the past, and gathered from the store-house of his own observations. This will nerve and give strength to his powers. This will serve as an ever active incentive to diligence. This will ever keep undimmed the burning fire of his industry. This mingling of science with the daily duties of life, this testing of knowledge in the crucible of experience, this passing from the meditations of the study to the active duties of society, has ever been found a condition most favorable to the culture and the development of the mind. Newton, though he performed the duties of the minut, trod the heavens with the proud step of genius. Roscoe, a merchant, amid the daily rounds of his commercial engagements, embalmed in imperishable history the splendor and glory of the Medici. Drew, chained by hard necessity to the bench of the shoemaker, communed there with the workings of his mighty spirit, and produced his treatise upon the immortality of the soul. Bowditch, passing his life as a supercargo, a sea captain, or as an actuary of an insurance company, held converse with those shining orbs above, and from their teachings traced a chart by which are guided British and American vessels over the trackless waste of waters to the remotest isles of the deep. Rogers, a banker, gave not the homage of his spirit to his gilded treasures, but wooed the muses, that he might gather inspiration to touch the harp of poetry, and sing the pleasures of memory. Sherman, a shoemaker, and Franklin, a printer, amid the

drudgery of their daily toils, cherished and cultivated those powers of mind, by which they were enabled to record their names high on the imperishable scroll of the *patres conscripti* of liberty and humanity.

To keep ever active his energy and to cherish an indomitable perseverance, the physician will find a still more powerful stimulus and a still stronger incentive, in the heavy responsibility which rests upon him.—He will be held accountable not only for the positive evil which he may inflict, but also for the good he has failed to accomplish, for the want of that skill and science which he might have gained. He is the appointed guardian of health and life. To him are entrusted the most cherished objects of the human heart. To his science and his skill is committed life—life with its hopes, life with its gifts, and life with all its affections. Can he then lapse into indolence, when the tortures of suffering humanity are ever sounding in his ears? Can the dull slumber of indifference creep o'er his soul, when he beholds disease marring the traits of beauty and wasting the proud form and the noble strength of manhood? Can he stand an unmoved gazer, when he sees labor reft of the strength around which are indissolubly entwined the tendrils of maiden affection, and feels the air stirred with the lamentations of maternal woe? Can he be listless, and not have his mind moved to vigorous action, as he watches pestilence stalking through the land, and waving his black banner of death, as though in triumphant mockery, o'er his skill? Palsied beyond cure must that mind be, whose powers cannot be galvanized into action by motives so strong and obligations so weighty. He who cannot be quickened by the stimulus of such incentives, must be buried beyond the power of resurrection.

If then the powers of the mind can be cultivated by knowledge, where can we find it broader, deeper and more inexhaustable than in the study of medicine? If the thirst of mind is to be slaked by the waters of science, where will you find fountains purer and more perennial? If the mental powers are to be strengthened and developed by exercise, where are heights higher to be clambered, and depths deeper to be fathomed, than are offered by the medical profession? If motives and incentives are requisite, where, tell me, where they can be found more powerful than those presented to the physician?

Is it not then true, that the profession of medicine, by its literature, by its science, by the application of this to the cure of disease, by the obligations to mature and perfect it, and by the motives and incentives it furnishes, offers to its devotee every facility that the human soul can covet, to attain the highest summit of intellectual excellence?

However great may be the development of the intellect, without a corresponding *moral* culture, the character is but half formed. The noblest intellect, without moral excellence, is but a fallen spirit. Knowledge bestows power, but a power that may be wielded for evil, as well as good. By a Catiline, it would be employed in carrying to the proud capitol of his country the consuming fire and the devastating sword; by the noble Gracchi, in relieving their fellow-countrymen from the pride,

the insolence and arrogance of a patrician order; by a treacherous Arnold, in forging the chains of tyranny for the land of his birth; by a noble Washington, in driving back from his country's shore an invading foe, and in securing independence to the soil of his nativity; by a philanthropic Howard, in bearing to the cheerless cell of the gloomy prison the balm of comfort and the consolation of religion; by an ambitious Napoleon, in overturning the empires of centuries, and building upon the wreck of their grandeur the frail memorial of his own personal glory.

True, that the general tendency of the pursuit of truth and science, is to emancipate from the tyranny of authority—to release from the fetters of interest—to elevate above the temptations of passion; but, however ardent may be that pursuit, and unmingled that homage, it gives no guaranty that the heart shall ever be inspired by true, just and pure motives. True, that from the ranks of the educated have ever come forth a host, a mighty host, to battle for civil and religious liberty, to plead for popular rights, and to build up the superstructure of constitutional governments. True, that in the halls of learning has been fostered a noble band of martyred heroes, who poured forth their heart's blood to rear and cement the glorious fabric of civil and religious liberty.

But that knowledge and mental culture do not necessarily bring with them virtue and moral excellence, daily experience proves and history furnishes abundant testimony. The historic page is darkened by the vices and the immoralities and the crimes of intellect, that had not been baptized in the regenerating waters of virtue. Alcibiades, gifted with intellect, was a bankrupt in morals. Seneca pandered to the worst vices of the monster that murdered his own mother. The hypocritical Domitian found ready flatterers in Quintilian and Martial. The tragic muse of Corneille was prostituted to offer the incense of flattery to the contemptible Mazarin. Bacon, gifted with an intellectual vision keener and more penetrating than has ever fallen to the lot of humanity, bartered justice, and was the meanest minion of servility. Otway, Dryden, Byron, and a host of others of the nobility in the empire of mind, were paupers in virtue. That science and intellectual culture do not bring with them moral worth and excellence, the ignominious deaths of Dodd, Arnold and Webster furnish unanswerable proof. Intellect divorced from moral excellence, can never attain true greatness.

It is the union of these that has secured for the characters of Phocion, Aristides, Cincinnatus, Hampden, Sidney, Washington and Howard, the admiring homage of men of every sect and every party, of every tongue and every nation.

To secure, then, the highest style of character, requires the combination of moral with intellectual excellence, and demands that the moral feelings and the affections of the heart should be no less sedulously cultivated than the mental faculties.

For moral culture, the medical profession offers ample and unnumbered opportunities. Its duties are one continued round of tenderest ministrations to diseased and suffering man. It calls for an uninterrupted

sacrifice of self upon the altar of philanthropy; and is thus propitious to the cure of selfishness, that epidemic of humanity, that rages where ever the human heart throbs, and that, unrestrained, degrades self to an idol, and converts nations into destroying powers. The physician is the servant of the high and the low, the rich and the poor; and must be obedient to their call, however unreasonable and capricious. Night, that to others brings the rest and the quietness that nature's tired powers demand, that to beast and to bird is the time of unwearied repose, gives to him no assurance that the slumber of sleep shall be undisturbed. Disease stays not its march to consult his desires or his pleasures; but calls him from the hall of festivity, from the amenities of the social circle and from the holy temple of religious worship. The storm and the tempest, the piercing cold and the bitter wind, that drives labor from its toil to nestle around its warm fire-side, and force the beast to seek his lair and the bird its nest, delay not his visit; but go he must, oftines for long and weary miles, through cheerless and deserted tracts, that he may cool the burning brow, or bind up the broken limb of his fellow man. Pestilence, that causes the stout heart to quail and that makes friendship, strengthened by the mutual charities of life and cemented by years of devotion, falter, and, in this hour of need, deny its brother; however terrible its ravages, and desolating its sway, cannot stop him; but he must go to infected hospitals, to dwellings crowded with the victims of the destroying angel, to places polluted with the dead and the dying, unconscious at what moment the archer's invisible shaft may pierce his heart, and force him to leave his wife a widow, and his children orphans, to continue, unsupported and unsustained, their dreary pilgrimage of life. Others, with the power of steam, and the speed of railroad, and the wings of the winds, may seek places and climes not infected; but the physician stands a sentinel upon the watch-tower to guard the citadel of life, and cannot, dare not, and, God trust, would not be so meanly base, as recreantly to desert those whom hard fate chains to infected regions, and leave them unprotected and unguarded to the fell destroyer's rage.

Shades of Barbour and Lane! bear me testimony, that the medical profession can teach nobly to subdue and conquer the selfishness of the human heart; for, when the angel of death seemed to have overshadowed this city with his wings, your lives were generously offered at the altar of the common weal.

Citizens of St. Louis! bear me witness, that during that dark hour, when pestilence brooded o'er your proud emporium, and caused its streets of commerce to resound only with the sad and solemn sounds of funeral cars; that then, the medical profession forgot self, and labored with a heroism undaunted, with a toil unremitting and unfaltering, to save his brother man. That then it was a noble brotherhood, cemented by bands of devotion to suffering humanity, and with their combined learning and talents, working with god-like beneficence to save from the ravages of pestilence this devoted city.

Among them were some, who had just entered the threshold of professional life ; young in years, with the anticipations of the morning of youth gilding the horizon of the future ; with the bright hopes and the dawning aspirations which the realities of experience had not yet beclouded ; that were ever formed, with every tie to bind them to life, seeking, regardless of danger, the miserable pallets of the poor and destitute, to bear to them the aid of medical science, and to snatch them from untimely graves ; and that band, *thanks be to God!* was composed in part of thy foster brothers, worthy sons of the St. Louis Medical School. May they long live to enjoy the sweet memories of the good deeds of that dark day, to reflect honor and credit upon their *alma mater* ; and may their lives ever be living testimonies that the medical profession can teach how to conquer the selfishness of the human heart !

The medical profession, moreover, offers the best opportunities for the cultivation of the noblest feelings, love, friendship, devotion and sympathy. The companions and associates of the physician are the sick and the afflicted, and his daily mission is to relieve their sufferings and sorrows. His heart becomes touched with their afflictions, and yearns towards them with a deeper sympathy. He sees man under most favorable conditions for the manifestations of his better feelings, that, unrestrained by the coldness and unmeaning formalities of fashionable heartlessness, come forth under afflictions, and hope to find, in the heart of his kind and generous physician, a chord of responsive sympathy. Knowing the ameliorating influence which kindness and friendship ever exercise in the cure of disease, it teaches him to be kind and considerate to the ignorant and even degraded ; and ever prompts him to manifest the same gentleness, the same tenderness and the same solicitude in the hovel of the poor, as in the palace of the rich. Man cannot, for days and months, be the companions of the sick, without having his soul refined by affliction, without having his mind elevated and purified, and without becoming bound to them by ties of love and friendship. He cannot for months bend over their sufferings, without having his heart warmed with sympathy and affection. The habitual performance of the kindest charities must kindle in the heart noble and generous feelings, which in their turn become principles of action. These strengthen and grow vigorous by indulgence, and finally become the motive powers to give life and animation to impulses and feelings, that otherwise would never have been embodied in action, but died within the human heart.

The medical profession is, then, a sacred calling. It elevates the thoughts, it refines the heart, it purifies the feelings. It cherishes a philanthropy that is not bounded by the confines of nations ; it nurtures a love that is not restricted by the narrow circle of rank, and kindles a charity whose tender ministries are not fettered by the bigotry of sect.

The intellect may be cultivated and the moral feelings highly enlightened, but there is still something requisite to the formation of a true character, which these do not confer. Conscience and moral sense may prompt the mind to act, and knowledge and science may teach how this



action can be most efficacious; but that it shall act, at all times and all hazards, often requires the culture of a moral heroism.

How often has truth been seen, and seen clearly; and still its votary had not the moral courage to proclaim it! How often has it been confined to the narrow precincts of a single mind, merely because that mind had not gathered up the moral courage to face the criticisms of the bigoted, the sneer of the narrow minded and the laugh of the fool!—How often have the noble impulses of a generous soul only stirred the depths of its own bosom, and gathered no voice, either of language or action, to spend them on ministries of good; to rouse others from the torpor of indifference, and to fire the slumbering energies of others with a new power, simply for the want of moral courage! How often have plans for moral amelioration fallen still-born, for the want of moral courage! How often does man fall into the follies, the vices and the dissipations around him, for the want of moral courage!

These are foes to individual happiness and national prosperity, more powerful and indomitable than were ever marshalled by a victorious chieftain, to conquer which demands a moral courage. To perform duty and to cleave fast to virtue and truth, in defiance of self-interest, regardless of opposition, indifferent to ridicule, notwithstanding persecution and unbribed by temptation, requires a courage that is noble and higher than has ever struggled on the battle-field. No man is, perhaps, more frequently than the physician, summoned to assume weighty responsibility and compelled to act without the aid and assistance of counsel.—He may, at times, divide this responsibility with another; but it still rests upon him, and he must assume it, conscious that he is oft-times watched with the eye of distrust, the suspicion of envy, and the mean malevolence of hatred. If he have learned that first lesson of a physician always, “to prefer the life of a fellow creature to his own interest and reputation;” if conscience still holds a habitation in his heart, and if its thunders be not hushed by the apprehension of popular reprobation; then will he ever act in accordance with the teachings of science and the revelations of reason, though in so doing, he may have to encounter the curved lip of contempt and the supercilious smile of pity.

It is thus, that the physician may be enabled to culture that moral courage, “that will make him hate the cowardice of doing wrong.”

May not then the profession of medicine be a moral Hercules, to strangle the Nemean lion of selfishness; to subdue the Lernean hydra of envy; to entrap the stag of overweening vanity; to cleanse the Augean stable of the human heart, and to gather from the garden of Hesperides the golden fruit of moral worth and true excellence.

Such are the influences which the medical profession may exercise in the formation of character, moral and intellectual. That it has exercised such, we need but look over the names of the uninterrupted priesthood, that has officiated at its altar. For learning and science, and for exhibition of the highest powers of mind and of the noblest affections of the heart, as many bright and shining examples may be found among



its votaries, as in any other pursuit of life. That such has been its influence the voice of learning and genius in every age has testified. That such has been its influence the annals of philanthropy furnish abundant testimony. Who have ever shown the deepest sympathy for suffering and oppressed humanity in every grade and condition of life? Who have been most active in founding hospitals for the sick, the infirm and the aged? Who have labored most zealously in rearing asylums for the blind, the deaf, the dumb, and the insane? Who have been foremost in rearing poor-houses, where the outcasts of poverty might find shelter and protection against the temptations of vice and of crime? Who have ever been most prominent in the warfare of toiling, bleeding, degraded labor, against the selfish avarice of capital? Who have proffered most powerful aid in the social reforms of the age? Who have been most active in founding libraries and in rearing museums? History, with a thousand voices, responds the physician!

Who, with the noblest heroism, dedicated himself to long years of tedious observation and research, without the hope of pecuniary recompense, to save the human family from the desolation of a loathsome and deadly disease!—Jenner. In that dark age when virtue was a crime, and the legacy of ancestors' nobility, an unpardonable offense; what shielded the head of Halle from the guillotine, but the memory of his kindness to the destitute and afflicted? When to sympathize with the condemned was to share their sentence of death, who sought the prison of Malesherbes to administer consolation? Who had the courage to stand forth in defense of the gifted Lavoisier? Who, when to be unhuman was the proudest of virtues, had the courage to be ever active in deeds of charity and kindness? The great and the noble hearted Halle.

In the dissemination of Christianity to heathen nations, where has the missionary found deeper sympathy and a stronger arm, than in the physician; who goes with him, as the incarnation of the spirit of Christ, to cleanse the leper, to heal the sick, to touch the eyes of the blind and to unseal the ears of the deaf,—that thus he may gain admission into their darkened minds for the light of Christianity, and fire their hearts with the genial warmth of divine morality.

It would seem that a profession demanding such moral and intellectual attainments, to which are confided interests so dear and vital, would have had secured to it some protection by the strong arm of the law. For the good that it promises, and the influence it is destined to exert, every consideration of duty and obligation requires, that legislation should guard its folds against the ignorant, the uncultured; against the poor simpleton, who, in the exuberance of his blinded vanity, idly imagines itself called to cast out the unclean spirit of disease, and that unprincipled knave, that views the afflictions of his fellow men, as so many excellent opportunities to filch, without the fear of detection, money from the pockets of the poor.

To guard it against ignorance and to close it against the selfishness of degraded humanity, is deemed in this free government too great a violation of personal rights. To practice law requires a certificate of qualification from one, whom it is presumed is learned in the law, (doubtless in the eyes of shallow brained pettifoggers, a most inexcusable tyranny over the rights of an American citizen); but to practice medicine requires only a license from a tax-gatherer, whose ability to decide upon the necessary attainments, is about as good as to demonstrate the truth of the Newtonian Philosophy. To take life is forbidden by the law, doubtless a most unjustifiable restriction upon personal liberty in the eyes of the highway murderer; but when terrified by the fear of the gallows, he can seek and find admission into the fold of the medical profession,—where, with fewer chances of detection, he can gratify the ruling passion of his heart. To get money under false pretences is an offense that secures incarceration in the penitentiary; but the law now legalizes this crime by the free and the unrestrained admission of the intellectually halt and lame, and the morally blind, into the medical profession. Thou shalt not maim nor injure thy brother, saith the law; but it will license men to practice a profession without qualifications, whose paths must be strewn with shattered constitutions, with tortured frames, and the bodies of the dead. The loafer who is too lazy to work, and too ignorant to think, has only to make a quack medicine, and have it stamped with that infallible signet of truth, the Patent Office seal, and he can smile at the protecting care of our city Recorder, and dispense with a residence in our city Work House.

Now, the law permits the ignorant fool, who can only repeat that heat is life and cold is death, the credulous nun-skull, that has made the wonderful revelation that infinitesimal doses of nothing will cure all diseases to which human flesh is heir, and the arrant knave who would gull fallible mortality with the belief that he has discovered a universal panacea; all to march under the banner of the true faith, as guardians and protectors of public health. It makes no discrimination in favor of virtue and intelligence; but places upon an equal footing, him, who, for long years, has consecrated the best energies of his mind to the study of the human frame; him who has denied himself the sweet repose that comes to the couch of the humblest and meanest laborer, to spend his nights over the decompositions of the human body, that he might learn its structure; him, who has hung around the bed-side of disease and pestilence that he might unravel their laws, with him who has just come forth from the moistened swaddling bands of hydropathy.

If health be a boon too rich to be counted and too great to be measured, trust it not to the care of the uneducated and the unprincipled. If in every age and every clime, a priesthood has been appointed to guard the temples of religion and to preserve uncorrupted and untainted its doctrines, is it not equally necessary that the priesthood of medical truth should be warmed with a devotion unsullied and unblemished to guard

undimmed the vestal fire of health, and gifted with intellect fitted to read and interpret the revelations of nature, as recorded in the hieroglyphics of phenomena on the temple of life ?

For the good it has done, and for the glory it has won, the temple of medicine merits that it should not be left unguarded, to be desecrated by the unhallowed passions of the selfish, and to have its altars polluted by the unwashed hands of the ignorant. Let its portals ever be guarded against ignorance and immorality. Rather let them enter every profession and pursuit of life, but let them not minister at the altar of medical science. Let them enter the profession of the law, and the learning of the judge and the common sense of the jury will be a guard against the evil they may produce. Let them enter the temple of religion, and the written charter of salvation to man is ever open to condemn vice, and to correct the errors that narrow minded bigotry may inculcate. Let them enter the halls of legislation, and the intelligence of the people will soon undo the wrongs they may inflict. But let them enter the medical profession, and who can measure the untold amount of irremediable evils they will cause ? They will blast hopes, they will blight affection, they will destroy life. They will undermine constitutions that must, the mere semblance of life, creep the earth for years, each day of which will be crowded with sufferings, a thousand fold more torturing than the agonies of death. Their evil ceases not with the life of their victim. They inflict wrongs which nature and art with all their healing and beneficent power, may require generations to correct ; for these diseased constitutions may be transmitted as a curse to their children and their children's children, even to the third and fourth generation, to poison life, to dwarf intellect, to dry up the well springs of affection, and to embitter fountains from whence God designed should alone flow the sweet waters of virtue and intelligence.

*Gentlemen Graduates :* This night we part ; but not with a sorrow unsoftened by consolations, nor with anticipations uncheered by hope. We give you up with something of the same sadness mingled with hope, with which the parent resigns, at the hymenial altar, his son, that idol of his heart, to the affections of another. He feels confident, that if loved and cherished, she will keep him untainted by the contagion of immorality, unseduced by vice, unbribed by temptation and unallured by the false fascinations of a meretricious glory. He knows, that though poverty come, she will ever tend him with the rich treasures of affection, and feed his heart with the hoarded manna of unbought love.—Should wealth and prosperity come with their allurements, he knows that she, as a protecting angel, will guard and shield him against their temptations ; and hallow and sanctify the joys and the pleasures they may bring. Should sickness and afflictions come, he knows she will ever watch and tend him with the ministries of affection and pour, into his wounded spirit, the balm of consolation. Should friends prove treacherous and man ungrateful, he feels she will ever guard him with the unfaltering loyalty of a woman's heart.

In resigning you to the medical profession, we know, if loved and cherished and cultured, it will enlarge your minds, and strengthen your hearts. That it will be a companion in solitude, a comforter in sorrow, and a solace when life is moistened with the dews of its departing eve. That its sacred ministries can fill your bosoms with sweet memories to cheer the desponding spirit when the world is cold and ungrateful; and bind to you the affections of your fellow man, when sickness and misfortune come. That though it bring not the dower of wealth, it can secure, that which is far nobler and richer, virtue and intelligence.—That, though it bring not fame, it will procure you that which is more desirable than fame, the approbation of your own conscience. That, though the promises of ambition be disappointed, the reveries of hope prove but an idle dream, the plighted faith of friendship, but treachery, the consciousness that life has been dedicated to truth and to virtuous action will cheer in every trial of life, and sustain the spirit in the hour of death. That it will gain for you, esteem and friendship, while living; and when dead, embalm your names in the memories of the good, the wise and the truly great.

In the name of science, whose devotees you have been, in the name of humanity, whose servants you are—in the name of philanthropy, whose ministers you become—I charge you to nurture an unswerving fidelity to human suffering, an incorruptible devotion to moral excellence and an unfaltering allegiance to learning. In the name of your *alma mater*, whose representatives you now go forth, I charge you to keep unbroken, your baptismal vows.—devotion to science, to virtue and to humanity. I charge you, that you guard with filial care, that precious jewel, her good name and fair character, and ever preserve it unsullied and untarnished. As a tutelary genius, may she ever be present, to stimulate to generous and self-sacrificing labors; to keep ever burning the love of excellence; to guard against stagnation, intellectual energy, and to preserve undivorced the holy wedlock of virtue and science. As a guardian angel, may she ever be present, to nerve against the temptations of poverty and that unholy thirst for notoriety; that, with syren persuasions, may ask you to sell, for a miserable pottage of gold and silver, your birth-right, to be numbered among her worthy sons. And, in after years, may she have the proud satisfaction of pointing to your long lives, illustrious by profound knowledge, beautified by virtue, hallowed by a noble sacrifice of self, and glorious by moral heroism, and presenting them as the rich fruits of her culture, proclaiming, these are her claims to public gratitude; these the rich legacy she bequeaths to posterity; these are her precious and priceless jewels—the brightest gems in the coronet of glory.

# LIST OF GRADUATES.

SESSION OF 1850-51.

| NAMES.           |   |   |   | RESIDENCE.       |
|------------------|---|---|---|------------------|
| G. S. CASE,      | - | - | - | <i>Missouri.</i> |
| J. P. CASSILLY,  | - | - | - | "                |
| W. H. CLEMENTS,  |   | - | - | <i>Kentucky.</i> |
| J. G. EVINGTON,  | - | - | - | <i>Missouri.</i> |
| A. S. HOLLADAY,  | - | - | - | "                |
| J. D. JONES,     | - | - | - | "                |
| B. LAFON,        | - | - | - | "                |
| EDW. LEA,        | - | - | - | "                |
| E. L. LE NEVE,   | - | - | - | "                |
| S. H. MCKAY,     | - | - | - | "                |
| J. M. MURPHY,    | - | - | - | <i>Texas.</i>    |
| D. A. POLIN,     | - | - | - | <i>Kentucky.</i> |
| S. ROBBINS, Jr., | - | - | - | <i>Missouri.</i> |
| G. G. STEELE,    | - | - | - | <i>Alabama.</i>  |
| E. S. STUART,    | - | - | - | <i>Kentucky.</i> |
| W. TAUSSIG,      | - | - | - | <i>Missouri.</i> |
| C. C. E. TODD,   | - | - | - | "                |
| G. WEBER,        | - | - | - | "                |
| T. W. WOODS,     | - | - | - | <i>New York.</i> |



